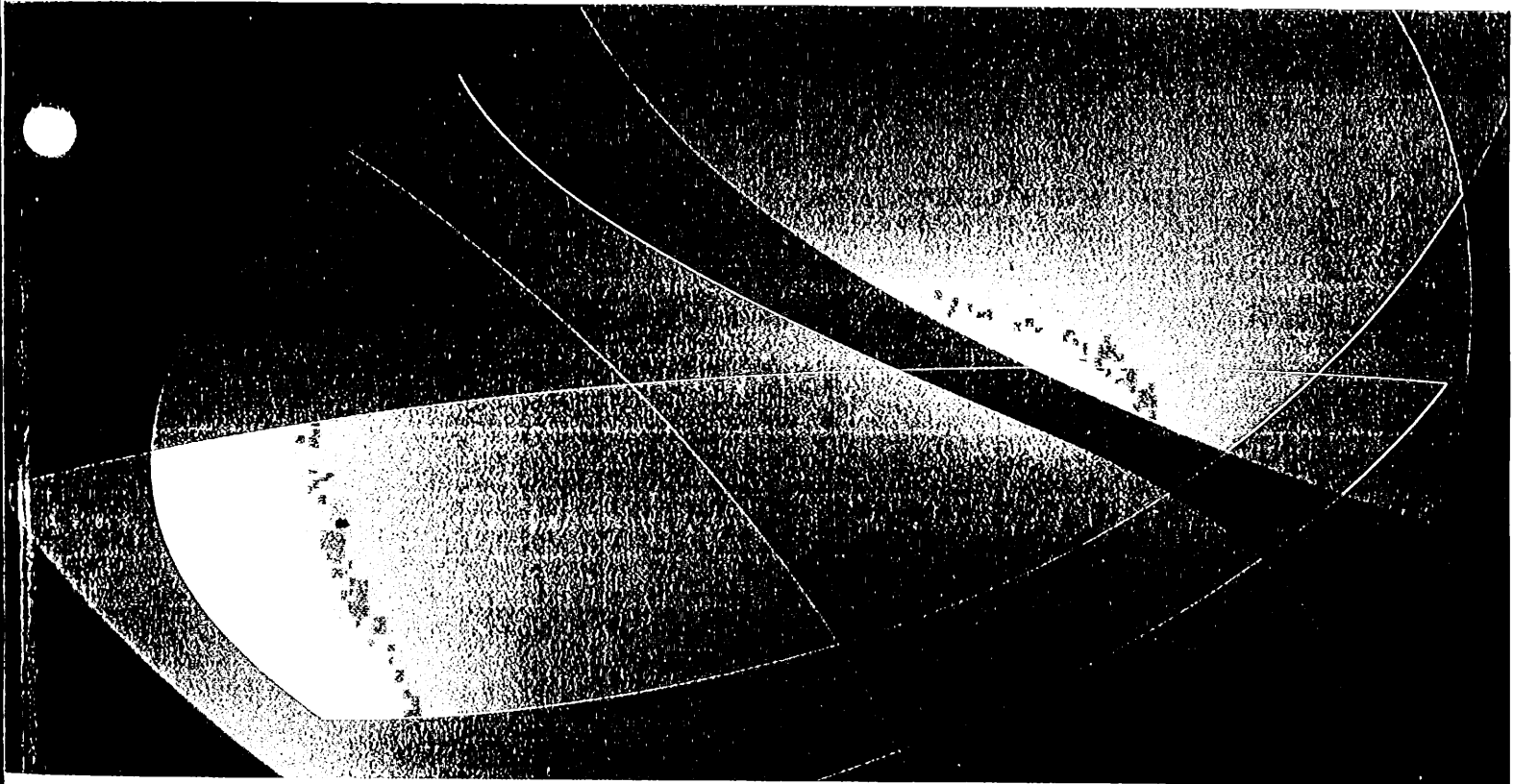


Seventh Edition

Student Teaching and Field Experiences Handbook



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"Sponge Activities"

Examples of sponge activities for secondary students:

1. Write one adjective (or other part of speech) for each letter of the alphabet.
2. List movies, television programs, or books that are related to the content of one of your classes.
3. Write a paragraph about a place that you have visited with your family; using sensory descriptions.
4. List as many musical instruments as you can, and place them in categories.
5. Explain how you would spend your money if you won the state's \$1,000,000 lottery.
6. List each class you are taking and the assignments that are due in each one.
7. Play a word game with vocabulary words from the lesson.

The following are a number of websites with ideas for sponge activities that also include classroom games:

http://www.inspiringteachers.com/classroom_resources/tips/classroom_management_and_discipline/sponge_activities.html

<http://www.innovativeclassroom.com>

http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/Tips/Sponge_and_Transition_Activities/

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

You may share your mentoring teacher's assigned, out-of-class, supervisory responsibilities, such as performing cafeteria, hall, or bus duty, or supervising special activities or events. Each school has its own policies regarding supervision of students waiting for buses, moving through hallways, and eating in the cafeteria. Observe your mentoring teacher closely, and learn the procedures for these situations so that you can handle them properly.

You may have hall or bus duty. Hall duty simply means supervising students in the halls as they change classes. Teachers are expected to keep an orderly flow of traffic, direct new students, and help with problems in school hallways. In some schools, bus duty is often performed by individual homeroom teachers, whereas in other schools, students assemble in a central location, where they are supervised by one or more teachers. If you assist your mentoring teacher in supervising groups of students from different classes, you might suggest ideas for passing the time constructively, such as reading a book or working on homework.

UNDERSTANDING DISCIPLINE

In every classroom, students occasionally misbehave, and dealing with them could present a problem. To deal with students when they are disruptive to the

teaching and learning process, you must understand what discipline is and what it is not. Discipline is controlled behavior. It involves your ability to get attention when you need it. It does not call for an absolutely quiet and rigidly controlled class, although some degree of order is implied; in fact, quiet, purposeful talking can occur in a well-disciplined, or well-managed, classroom, with students moving freely about as they work on appropriate activities.

Disruptions occur when students infringe on the teacher's freedom to teach and the other students' freedom to learn. For example, the teacher should be able to speak without interruption in order to teach, and students should be able to listen attentively without distractions caused by other students. When students' behavior interferes with these freedoms, discipline problems exist.

If a student is inattentive but not interfering with others, there is no real disruption; however, you may need to deal with this student's lack of attention at a later time. Teachers vary in their tolerance for students' talk and movement. By simply learning to accept reasonable student activity while they work independently or cooperatively, you may find that many perceived disruptions don't really exist.

Teachers often report discipline as their number one problem or challenge, probably because of the complexity of maintaining discipline under constantly changing circumstances. You must consider the students' personalities and backgrounds, the type of learning situation in which they are involved, and the distractions that may interfere with their concentration. Dealing with disruptive students is difficult because, in most cases, you must react on the spot, and you may not always anticipate the consequences of your actions. Taking time to create and implement appropriately planned disciplinary interventions will help with consistency and fairness.

UNDERSTANDING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

All behavior has a cause or a purpose. Discovering and understanding the cause of an undesirable behavior may help you prevent its recurrence. Unfortunately, many causes are complex and difficult to analyze.

Many things may contribute to discipline problems: societal contexts, elements of the classroom environment, the students themselves, the instructional tasks, or maybe even you! Observers of social institutions, such as schools, report that those institutions generally reflect the state or condition of society. If

the society tends to accept rudeness and lack of consideration for others, for example, students are likely to bring these actions to class. Many feel that educators are change agents, and in order to cause change in society, you must change the factors you can control. Teachers make the difference in the classroom. You create your classroom environment. Your disposition toward teaching is reflected in the environment you create. Your classroom management plan reflects your philosophy toward teaching and learning. Analyze your classroom. Is there something in the room you could change that might reduce the number of discipline problems? Do you respect your students? Are you committed to creating a community of learners? Modeling respect for your students guides them toward appropriate interactions with others.

You may inadvertently be responsible for some of the discipline problems that arise. Can you answer all of these questions affirmatively?

1. Are my lessons well planned and purposeful?
2. Am I considering the interests and needs of all of the students?
3. Are the students actively engaged in learning?
4. Is the material at a developmentally appropriate level of difficulty, and do I have reasonable expectations for each student?
5. Do the students understand exactly how I expect them to behave and know the consequences of misbehavior?
6. Am I fair and consistent in the implementation of my classroom management plan?

If you can honestly answer "Yes" to each of these questions, you will prevent many possible discipline problems.

Students possess such a bewildering array of emotional, physical, and social problems that it is no wonder they sometimes misbehave. Sometimes you may be able to help students solve problems or accept what's troubling them. Sometimes just knowing that you care makes a difference to them. Students whose personal problems no longer interfere with their concentration are less likely to cause problems for you.

As adolescents move toward adult independence, many take risks to see how far they can go, until their behavior becomes unacceptable and you must do something about it. Older students may be uncooperative because they resent being in school and attend only because the law requires them to be there until they reach a certain age.

Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1998) suggest that students are social beings striving for acceptance. When they misbehave, they believe that their actions

will get them the attention they crave. These students exhibit characteristics as follows: (a) attention getting, often in the form of disruption, wanting special favors and extra services, and irrelevant questioning; (b) power seeking, through arguing, lying, contradicting, and showing hostility; (c) revenge seeking, by hurting others through vicious or violent acts; and (d) displaying inadequacy, through withdrawal based on feelings of helplessness and failure. Dreikurs advises teachers to confront such a student: express the mistaken goal, discuss the faulty logic involved, and get the student to think about the reason for the behavior. He claims that this opens communication and allows the teacher to take constructive actions that will ultimately change the student's behavior.

Discipline problems may result from misunderstanding the traditions and behaviors of students from diverse cultures. For example, in many cultures students cooperate and work together at home, but in our schools, they are often expected to work individually, especially on tests. Thus, the teacher may regard students as cheating or disruptive when they are simply following their natural inclinations to help each other on such tasks. Providing cooperative-learning activities helps these students adjust to the school's expectations.

Some students are at times simply unable to control their behavior. Students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may be fidgety, easily distracted, inattentive, and often quite disruptive in class. Although medication may help these students, you can also reduce disruptions by assigning their most difficult work early in the day, giving explicit instructions, providing active involvement, assigning short tasks, and seating these students close to you.

Your situation as a student teacher or practicum student is slightly different from that of the classroom teacher. No matter who is doing the teaching, the classroom management plan established by the mentoring teacher usually prevails. The students realize that even if you're in charge of this lesson, they will ultimately have to answer to their regular teacher. Make sure that you discuss in detail any change from the established plan, especially regarding the rules and consequences. Since you don't have the experience of a regular teacher, you may fail to notice small incidents that could lead to big trouble in the future. You may also overlook occasional infractions because you want the students to like you; however, they will take advantage of you if they discover they can get away with misbehaving.

Complete Activity 5.3 to analyze classroom management strategies.

of a respectful learning environment. However, remember that some decisions need to be discussed and negotiated, as demonstrated in the Dennis the Menace comic on page 83.

Presentations of Lessons

Carefully constructed instructional units and lessons provide the foundation to establishing an effective learning environment. The success of your classroom management plan is dependent upon your ability to create effective learning situations and maintain student engagement in the learning process. To facilitate effective instruction, make the classroom as comfortable and free from distractions as you can. Get everyone's attention before you begin, and be sure that desks or tables are cleared of everything except what the students will need during the lesson. Be well prepared, and maintain good eye contact with students during the lesson. Know your lesson well enough that you don't have to read from the manual, or your written plans, while you teach. Watch for students who may have trouble understanding the work, and be ready to help them over their hurdles; otherwise, their frustration can erupt as behavior problems. Be ready to switch to another method if one strategy isn't working.

Start and end your lessons promptly and make transitions from one lesson to another quickly and smoothly. In discussion lessons, let only one student answer at a time; this prevents the confusion that results when several students call out answers. Keep your lessons interesting and fast-paced. If you are enthusiastic, the students will catch your enthusiasm. Get them actively involved in your lessons and keep them motivated, since highly motivated students seldom cause discipline problems. Have more than enough material for the entire class period. In case you run short, keep ideas in mind for filling in the remaining minutes productively.

Give directions clearly and precisely. Reinforce important directions by writing them on the board. Be sure the students know what choices they have when they finish their work. If they don't know what to do next, they may become disruptive. If necessary, explain things more than once or provide written, as well as verbal, directions so that everyone understands. Put things in simple words for young students.

Your teaching style makes a difference in how students respond to you. Move around the room, and use nonverbal communication to interact with various students as you teach. Call on students who seem inattentive to get them involved.

The volume of your voice can set the noise level of the class. If you raise your voice to be heard, the stu-


dents will only get noisier. If you lower your voice, they will become quiet to hear what you have to say. Be sure, however, that you can be heard in the back of the room and that you speak distinctly.


Reacting to Danger Signals

If you're alert to impending trouble, you can often stop problems just as they start. Boredom, daydreaming, restlessness, and long periods of inactivity breed discipline problems. Danger signals include a paper wad shot across the room, a half-smothered giggle, or a quick exchange of looks between students.

When you sense trouble brewing, move quickly to avert it. Try these ideas:

1. Change your tactics fast. Switch to a different approach, read a story, play a rhythm game, or discuss an event in which students share an interest (for example, an upcoming sports event or school activity).
2. Use nonverbal communication to avert the problem. Catch and hold the instigator's eye. Pause in midsentence and look intently at the potential troublemakers. Shake your head slowly to indicate disapproval.
3. Remind the students of a privilege or reward that will be the consequence of good behavior, while looking in the direction of the potential problem.
4. Move closer in proximity to the source of trouble. Indicate that you are aware of what's going on.
5. Speak more softly and slowly. You will get the students' attention for the moment as they try to figure out why you shifted your speech.
6. Refocus students when you sense impending problems by saying something like "Guess what is going to happen this Friday?"
7. Use humor. Laugh with the students and occasionally at yourself. A good laugh reduces tension. Laugh off a minor incident instead of making a big deal of it. For example, to a student who has just thrown a paper airplane, say "Billy, I'll bet the Air Force could use you to help design airplanes. Now let's get back to work."



FOR 

INTASC Standard: 5 (See page 19)
 Describe an occasion when you used a classroom-management technique effectively, or discuss how you were able to improve a student's behavior by applying certain techniques (or do both).


8. Call on students you believe are about to cause a problem to answer a question, or simply insert a student's name in midsentence to bring attention back to the lesson; for example, "The next question, Johnny, is number seven."
9. Confiscate distracting materials, especially toys or food items that are diverting students' attention.

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' SELF-DISCIPLINE

As long as students rely on you to control their behavior, they are likely to lapse into poor behavior if you do not constantly direct their actions. The objective of good discipline, according to Marshall (1998, p. 14), "is to increase self-responsibility, social awareness, and social responsibility." The effects of rewards and punishments, or consequences, usually last only as long as these consequences are in effect. These extrinsic motivators do not change underlying attitudes and behaviors. Although rewards usually work better than threats and punishments, teachers use both types of strategies to manipulate behavior (Kohn, 1994). However, the child who finishes work in order to get a sticker or a piece of candy may soon work only for the reward, instead of thinking creatively, exploring ideas, and taking risks.

Effective long-term classroom management does not rely solely on a system of rewards or punishments. As an alternative, Kohn (1993, 1994, 1996) recommends creating a classroom community featuring trust, shared responsibility, and active student participation in decision-making. As part of the community, students feel valued and respected; they care about one another. They feel safe, both physically and emotionally. Because these students care about others, they are better at conflict resolution, and there is little need for such disciplinary measures as rewards and punishments.

Students are often unaccustomed to being responsible for their own behavior because teachers have usually told them what to do and what not to do. Creating a democratic class community may take some time and patience, but your efforts will pay off in terms of building rapport with your students, gaining their respect, and decreasing disruptions. Teach them to be responsible for their actions by forming groups where they direct some of their own activities, expecting them to perform classroom duties, encouraging them to keep records of their progress, having them evaluate their own progress, and setting up a tutoring program where they guide other students' learning. Start with small tasks and work up to larger ones as students demonstrate readiness to assume more responsibility. Help them identify and set goals for themselves; then



FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO

INTASC Standards: 5, 9
(See page 19)

Describe your philosophy of discipline in classroom management and include the description in your portfolio. State your goals and the techniques you would use and those you would avoid.

encourage them to find ways to reach their goals. If students believe that you think they are capable of directing many of their own activities, they are likely to live up to expectations.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Some teachers seem to be aware of everything that goes on in the classroom, even when they don't appear to be looking. Effective teachers develop a sort of sixth sense that enables them to pick up the vibrations from their classes so that they usually know what's happening. You can acquire this ability if you develop sensitivity to sounds, movements, voices, and behavior patterns within your classroom.

Teachers with "eyes in the back of their heads" are usually effective classroom managers. In fact, it is difficult to observe the techniques they use because their methods are subtle and unobtrusive. A quiet nod, the mention of a student's name, or a warning glance usually suffices. Don't worry if you haven't yet mastered this technique—it often takes years of practice.

Despite your attempts to instill a sense of social responsibility and create a community, you may sometimes reach a point at which you must discipline a class or an individual student. When problems do develop, consider several factors before taking action. Keep in mind the purpose of disciplinary action: to maintain or restore order by helping the student control his or her behavior, not to seek revenge for violation of the rules. You should also consider the reason for misbehavior and the personal circumstances of the misbehaving student. Appropriate disciplinary measures vary according to the student's grade level, special instructional needs, degree of motivation for learning, and personality. There is no single solution for any problem.

Before deciding what to do, consider your school's policy regarding discipline. Check with your mentoring teacher to find out what types of disciplinary action are permitted if a student misbehaves. In cases of persistent inappropriate behavior or major infractions,

you need to know what to do. You may need to keep dated, explicit records of incidents, which may be used for referrals or for decisions about placing students in an alternative setting. You need to know when parents should be contacted and when suspension or expulsion is a consequence. Your mentoring teacher has the responsibility for contacts with parents in most cases and, along with the administration, for any decisions about suspension or expulsion.

Effective Classroom Management Techniques

Some common disciplinary practices are considered generally effective; some are considered borderline and may be good or bad, depending on the circumstances; others are thought to be inappropriate.

* **Reinforcers.** Both verbal and nonverbal reinforcers are effective for encouraging good behavior and discouraging improper conduct.

* **Restitution.** A student who takes or destroys something should be expected to return or restore it. If this is impossible, the student should compensate for the loss in some other way.

Role-Playing. Students appreciate the feelings of other students and see incidents in a new light when they role-play.

Contracts. The use of contracts works well for intermediate and secondary students. Contracts are agreements that deal with specified behaviors, tasks, responsibilities, and rewards. They give the impression of a legal commitment and are signed by both the teacher and the student.

Group Discussions. Guided, open discussions are good ways to handle disputes and discipline problems. Students feel involved and responsible for carrying out their own recommendations.

Suggestion Box. A suggestion box allows students to express dissatisfaction. After reading the students' notes, you might want to make some changes. Select one or two suggestions for students to discuss in class in order to resolve the complaint.

* **Nonverbal Signals.** Effective use of nonverbal signals and body language is one of the best forms of discipline. Examples include a frown, a smile, a nod, movement toward a student, an intent look, a raised hand, and a wink.

Time-Out. Time-out can be used to remove a student who is highly distracting to the rest of the class or who is acting in such a way that she or he could harm others. The teacher isolates the student from the rest of the class for a period of time until the student regains control. The isolation area should be secluded, quiet, and dull.

* **Appeal to Reason.** When told why good behavior is necessary, students are often persuaded to act well. You might say, "Be careful with the equipment so we don't break anything" or "Work quickly so we'll have time to plan our party."

Approval of Behavior. This method generally works well in elementary school. The teacher notices students who are "ready to begin," are "sitting up nicely," or "have their books open to the right page." Other students follow suit because they also want recognition.

* **Grounding.** This technique is effective for a student who doesn't work well or doesn't cooperate at a learning center. The student must return to his or her seat to work until ready to rejoin the group.

Matching the Penalty to the Offense. A consequence should relate to the offense so that the student can see the reason for it.

Attention-Getting Signals. Agree on a signal to get instant attention, such as raising your arm, ringing a bell, or slowly counting down "3-2-1."

Writing It Out. When a student misbehaves, ask the student to write what happened, why it happened, and how the situation could be handled better next time.

Borderline Techniques

* **Planned Ignoring.** This technique may work for a while. Sometimes if you ignore a problem, it will go away; at other times, however, it only becomes worse, until you are forced to deal with it. (Monitor attention)

Apologies. Genuine apologies are effective. If you force students to say words they don't mean, you are only teaching them to lie. Their apologies mean nothing.

Removal of Students from the Classroom. Although you may be tempted to remove an out-of-control student, try to settle the matter yourself, since you and your mentoring teacher probably know the situation better than anyone else.

These are all problematic

including next page!

Merits and Demerits. This system consists of awarding or taking away points for certain kinds of behavior. This technique may work well if it is carefully structured and used on a temporary basis. Students should eventually learn to control their own behavior, however, rather than rely on outside incentives.

Denial of Privileges. A denied privilege is usually an effective penalty. It can have a negative effect, however, if a student is being denied something that he or she really needs. For instance, denying a hyperactive child recess is detrimental, since he or she probably needs this outlet to burn off surplus energy.

Scoldings. An occasional verbal reprimand is often necessary, but a bitter harangue has a negative effect on the whole class. Avoid constant faultfinding and long discourses on behavior.

Personal Conferences. A one-to-one conference often clears up problems and helps the student and teacher understand each other. Privacy is necessary for a free exchange of views and for keeping a matter confidential. The teacher must listen carefully to the student's views. Conferences are ineffective when the teacher simply makes accusations and the student is unresponsive; they can be destructive if they deteriorate into arguments.

Inappropriate Techniques

Additional Classwork or Homework. This practice generally results in the student's disliking the subject or content area.

Ridicule or Sarcasm. Students who are embarrassed or humiliated by their teachers may suffer serious psychological damage.

Grade Reduction. Grades for academic achievement should not be affected by behavior.

Threats. It's usually better to act than to threaten. If you do make threats, be prepared to follow through. Generally, threats cause students to become upset and suspicious.

Corporal Punishment. Corporal punishment rarely corrects a problem. Like threats, it usually has a negative effect on students and should be used only as a last resort, if ever. Improper use of corporal punishment can result in legal challenges. As a student teacher or practicum student, you should never use nor serve as a witness for the implementation of corporal punishment.

EVALUATING FOUR CASE STUDIES

The following case studies are based on actual situations. Read them, and evaluate the teacher's action in each case. Were other options available? How would you have handled these students?



CASE STUDY 5.6

The Last Straw

Jeff, a twelfth-grade student, came from a low-socioeconomic-level home where he was taught the value of a good education. His parents were interested in his progress and encouraged him to do well.

In industrial arts class, Jeff was a reasonably good student, but he often caused minor disruptions. He would distract other students by sticking his foot out to trip them, making wisecracks, laughing raucously at nothing, and occasionally defying his teacher, Mr. Hamlin. Mr. Hamlin put up with his behavior for several weeks. He knew that Jeff was basically a good student and did not feel that Jeff's interruptions warranted a confrontation.

One morning, Jeff decided he would go to the cosmetology class to get a haircut during industrial arts; however, Mr. Hamlin refused to give him permission. Jeff cursed at Mr. Hamlin and said that he was going to get his hair cut anyway. At this point, Mr. Hamlin realized he had been too lenient with Jeff. He knew something would have to be done, or there would be a total breakdown in discipline in his class. Mr. Hamlin took Jeff to the office, where the principal suspended him for his defiant and discourteous behavior.

Following his suspension, Jeff returned to school with his father. During a conference with the guidance counselor, Mr. Carlin, the entire situation was reviewed and correct standards of behavior were discussed. A contract was drawn up, which allowed Jeff to return to class as long as he acted appropriately. Mr. Carlin went over the contract with Jeff and his father in detail. If Jeff failed to live up to his commitment, he would be dropped from the class roll. Jeff seemed to hold no malice toward his teacher or the counselor and willingly agreed to sign the contract, along with his father and Mr. Carlin. The counselor also requested that Jeff apologize to Mr. Hamlin and the rest of the class, but only if he felt he owed them an apology.

Mr. Hamlin later reported that Jeff had been much less disruptive in class and that he was behaving more maturely.